



Exercises can be essential to stop problems recurring.

For many patients that come into the clinic, it is not a sudden injury that brings them in for treatment, but a gradual build up of aches and pains resulting from “normal” everyday activities.

Our working environment, posture and exercise (or lack of it) can all affect how our joints and muscles function, frequently leading to joint and muscle discomfort.

Whilst our instinct is often to focus on getting rid of their pain, it is important to understand the other effects that our posture and lifestyles are having on

our spine, and what you can do to help prevent problems from returning.

To keep it simple, there are 2 groups of muscles that act across the joints of your spine. Large ‘global’ muscles are used to move your spine and limbs. But another set of muscles, the ‘core stability’ muscles, help to keep your spine and joints strong

and stable during these movements.

During episodes of back pain, and especially if the problem is recurrent or long-standing, these core stability muscles can start to weaken making them less effective in their protective role. In conjunction with your chiropractic treatment, a programme of exercises can help to improve the strength and mobility of your spine making it better able to cope with the daily stresses you put your body through ... and that means reducing the risk of re-injury.

If you are now dreading the thought of having to go to the gym, you’ll be glad to know that stability exercises can easily be done at home without the need for expensive equipment.

The exercises you need will depend on the type of condition you have and the underlying cause. They are designed to improve the strength, stamina and flexibility of your joints, as well as balance and co-ordination which are all essential to keep your spine in optimum shape. So if you would like to learn more about keeping your spine healthy and reducing the risk of recurrent problems, have a chat with your chiropractor about core stability exercises at your next visit. •



Chiropractic and Massage can be a powerful combination.

A combination of chiropractic care and massage can be extremely powerful. Customised sessions, using a variety of deep tissue work, stretching, mobilising, and lighter touch can have a profound effect. Sarah Hoare, our massage therapist, has practiced massage in Bristol since 2002 and joined The Parker Clinic in May 2007. Sarah also teaches professional massage courses and introductory workshops at the BCMB. All the staff have benefited from her expert touch! •

Ignoring general “aches and pains” is often storing up trouble for later.

It is easy to put up with day-to-day “aches and pains” until they become too painful to ignore. Many mechanical problems do re-occur, and with the view that “prevention is better than cure”, a great number of patients benefit from periodic check-ups to maintain optimum function. If you feel that this may be of interest to you, please contact us to make an appointment. •



Baby Boom at The Parker Clinic ...



A Lot of our pregnant patients have given birth to beautiful healthy babies over the last few months.

Congratulations, and welcome to all these new little chiro-kids. It’s been a privilege to check all the tiny spines and craniums. As Virgil said ... “as the twig inclines so the tree grows”, and we feel very strongly that small problems corrected early reduces the need for correction later in life.

For all of you who are already parents, you will know how distressing it is to have a constantly crying baby. Gentle chiropractic care helps reduce the strain on the spine and cranium that can be caused by a difficult birth. This so often allows the baby to be more comfortable and settled. If you have any questions about treating children, please do ask. •



Headaches may be common ... but they are not normal.

All too often it is tempting to reach for the painkillers in an effort to take away the pain. But why is the pain there in the first place ?

Pain is our body's protective mechanism, it is a way of letting us know something is not working correctly. Taking painkillers can be like turning up the radio when your car engine starts to grind and rattle. You may not hear the noises any more, but that doesn't mean they've gone away. Regularly taking painkillers can, in some circumstances, actually cause more headaches.

While there are many causes of headaches, one of the most common is when the spinal bones and muscles of the upper neck no longer support the head properly. This can then irritate the nerve supply, or indeed the blood supply, to the head.

70% of headaches are tension related. We often find that there may be a previous

injury that has caused a loss of the normal spinal movement. In turn this can lead to an increase in the tension of the neck and shoulder muscles and ligaments. By relieving the cause of the tension, we can reduce the strain on the structures of the neck and so relieve the headache. Grinding teeth can also be a factor and your chiropractor will assess you for that.

While tension headaches are the most common type that we can help, there are other types of headache that can respond favourably to chiropractic care. For example; sinus headaches and migraines.

It is also important to consider any lifestyle factors that could be effecting headaches. Your chiropractor will be able to give you advice on what you can do to help. •

Have I slipped a Disc?

The short answer is No ... contrary to common opinion, discs do not "slip".

A disc is a shock-absorbing pad between the bones of the spine (the vertebrae) that allows normal movement to occur. It is very strongly attached to the vertebrae above and below and so cannot slip. The disc is made up of an outside tough fibrous layer surrounding an inner gel-like centre. With injury the outside layer can tear resulting in inflammation, and allowing the inner gel to rupture through the tears. This is called a bulging or herniated disc. The bulging section of the disc can then press onto nerves that pass very close to the disc.

The signs and symptoms of a herniated disc are very characteristic and your chiropractor will examine you for these. A



disc herniation will improve with treatment but is a relatively serious injury compared to a sprain and so will take longer to recover. In a small number of cases, surgery may be required. However, chiropractors are able to recognise these cases and will often arrange an MRI scan to determine whether a referral is necessary.

Disc herniations are more common in people who have had recurrent back injuries. A good reason to deal with any problems before they get to that stage. •

New Website LIVE

It has taken rather longer than planned, but the new website is up and running. For information, exercises and more log on to :

www.parkerclinic.co.uk

Staff Profile

Name: Joanne Ladd
Qualifications: BSc(Hons) DC
Position: Senior Chiropractor
Location: Bristol



Joanne (or "Jo" to everyone except her mother) joined the chiropractic team at The Parker Clinic in June 2007 and has rapidly become an indispensable member of the team. She has an infectious enthusiasm for chiropractic which rubs off on everyone.

Jo graduated from the Welsh Institute of Chiropractic and worked in Essex, initially as an associate before progressing to a senior chiropractor position. She then went travelling for a year and explored all around the world. Fortunately for us, she eventually concluded that there was no place like home. Jo is a Bristol girl and is very happy to have returned to her roots. ... and we are all very happy that she did. •

Parker Clinic Staff

Chiropractors :

Stuart Smellie BSc DC FCC FEAC
Katriona Heaslip MSc DC MCC
Simon Bodley MSc DC CCEP MCC
Joanna Ladd BSc(Hons) DC

Massage Therapist :

Sarah Hoare MTI

Acupuncturist :

Al Hessari BA LicAc MNAcC CQSW

Receptionists :

Ros, Maggie, Carol and Maria